

By STJ/K Date 7/30/18

POC 23-9 UGANDA  
Department of State **TELEGRAM**



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FROM AMBASSADOR FERGUSON

SUBJ: UGANDA COUP

REF: STATE 014276

1. MR. WALKER AND I EXPLORED AT LENGTH POINTS REFTEL AS INSTRUCTED AND REPORTED SEPTEL.

2. WHILE I REALIZE I HAVE BEEN OUT OF TOUCH WITH FAST MOVING SITUATION IN KAMPALA AND WASHINGTON I FEEL COMPELLED TO REPORT MY OWN STRONG NEGATIVE REACTION TO PARA.

3 (A) REFTEL FOR FOLLOWING REASONS STATED IN SUMMARY FORM:

(A) MEDIATION BETWEEN OBOTE/AMIN NOT IN US INTERESTS IN UGANDA OR IN OUR INTERESTS REST OF BLACK AFRICA. US INTERESTS UGANDA WILL BE BETTER SERVED BY LESS "PROGRESSIVE" GOV. LIKELY EMERGE UNDER WHOEVER REAL POWER IS. MY GUESS IS ONAMA.

(B) OBOTE COULD NOT ACCEPT A UK MEDIATOR AS WOULD COMPLETELY DESTROY HIS PROGRESSIVE AFRICAN IMAGE. MOREOVER, OBOTE AS PREVIOUSLY REPORTED IS PATHOLOGICALLY ANTI-BRITISH, E.G. ON TWO OCCASIONS IT HAS BEEN STATED TO ME THAT HE BELIEVES UK HAS BEEN OUT TO GET HIM FROM THE BEGINNING INCLUDING BEING BEHIND ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT. OTHER SOURCES HAVE CONFIRMED THIS IS SINCERELY HELD BELIEF.

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PA/HO Department of State  
E.O. 12958, as amended  
April 21, 2005

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(C) NON OAU MEDIATOR SIMPLY NOT POSSIBLE AFTER NIGERA-BIAFRA.

(D) THE LIKLIHOOD OF A KENYAN MEDIATOR I BELIEVE IS NIL. I DO NOT BELIEVE AFTER STRAINS OF LAST SIX MONTHS THERE IS SINGLE OFFICIAL KENYAN WHO REGRETS OBOTE'S DEPARTURE OR WHO WOULD LIFT A FINGER TO AID HIS RETURN IN ANY CAPACITY. MOREOVER, KENYAN'S FUTURE INTERESTS MORE LIKELY SERVE BOTH IF BOTE

COMPLETELY OUT OF WAY AND WITH ANTI-OBOTE GOU IN CHARGE.

(E) COMPROMISE WITH OBOTE IN PICTURE WILL UNDERCUT VERY PEOPLE WHO HAVE BEEN MOST SYMPATHETIC TO USG AND USG POSITIONS, I.E. AMIN AND ONAMA. MOREOVER, LIKELY CENTER OF GRAVITY NEW GOU CERTAINLY WILL BLUNT INFLUENCE SOVS AND CHICOMS AND HENCE GOU APT TO BE SOMEWHAT MORE MODERATE AT HOME, IN OAU AND IN UN.

(F) INVESTMENT CLIMATE IN UGANDA CANNOT HELP BUT BE IMPROVED WITH OBOTE OUT OF PICTURE. UNLIKE RECENT COUPS AFRICA AND SOME LAS, THIS COUP IS FROM RIGHT, NOT FROM "PROGRESSIVE" LEFT.

(G) I BELIEVE COMPROMISE GOU, GIVEN OBOTE'S PAST PERFORMANCE IN 1962-66 COMPROMISE GOU, WILL BE INHERENTLY MORE UNSTABLE AND DISRUPTIVE THAN THE POSSIBILITY UP-COMING WEAK AMIN GOV.

(H) PROBLEM FUTURE EAC LIES NOT NOW IN UGANDA BUT IN TANZANIA AND THAT PROBLEM IS NYERERE'S I.E. WHO TO RECOGNIZE. SINCE HE CANNOT DO BOTH, NYERERE IS NOW ONLY ONE IN WHOSE INTERESTS IT WOULD BE TO BRING ABOUT A COMPROMISE. BUT I DO NOT BELIEVE HE CAN PLAY ROLE DUE TO OBVIOUS PRO-OBOTE IDENTIFICATION.

(I) FINALLY, BELIEVE THAT MAJOR FRIEND, UK, INTERESTS CLEARLY BEST SERVED BY ANY GOU IN WHICH OBOTE HAS NO PART.

3. I BELIEVE CRUCIAL PROBLEM AND REAL POSSIBILITY IS

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COUNTER COUP OR INTRA-COUP FROM OBOTE FOLLOWERS OR OTHER RIVALS FOR POWER WHO HAVE CAPACITY TO GOVERN (WHICH AMIN DECIDEDLY HAS NOT). AMIN'S VERY LACK OF CAPACITY MAKES THIS EVENTUALITY ALMOST CERTAIN. I DO NOT BELIEVE THAT AN AMIN/OBOTE COMPROMISE WOULD IN ANY WAY LESSEN THIS PROBABILITY. INDEED BELIEVE REVERSE IS TRUE.

ANNENBERG

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